

ANDROPOGON CITRATUM. (Poaceae.) 33786. Roots of an oil-grass from Trivandrum, Travancore, southern India. Presented by Mr. N. Kunjan Pillai, Director of Agriculture, Travancore. "A grass yielding oil in a fairly large quantity. It is locally known as Sambarapulla, (being used for flavoring butter-milk). This grass is more common in Ceylon and along the East coast. In the interior of Travancore it does not occur in abundance. There is reason to believe that the grass came from Ceylon because near Cape Comorin and up to a place called Arakkanikulam the grass occurs in abundance. Another peculiarity is that while I have never seen this grass in flower in Ceylon either under cultivation or in a native condition, it flowers freely amidst the boulders of Arakkanikulam on either side of the main road and also near the cape in Marathuvamala. This I think is due to its transport into a hotter locality. The boulders get heated and the grass lying between gets 'forced' as plants are in hot houses in other countries. When I saw the grass last time it was getting a disease corresponding to the black rust of cholam (maize). The pest was just beginning. The plants which I have selected are free. This grass is mixed with other Andropogons and distilled. The industry is in the hands of the uneducated and no sorting of varieties is done, because knowledge is absent." (Pillai.) For distribution later.

ANDROPOGON NARDUS. (Poaceae.) 33787. Roots of an oil-grass from Trivandrum, Travancore, southern India. Presented by Mr. N. Kunjan Pillai, Director of Agriculture, Travancore. "A grass very common all over Travancore, except at great elevations and very near the sea coast. In soft alluvial loam and under careful cultivation this grass grows to a height of 6 or 8 feet. This grass can be very easily identified by a light magenta tinge from the bottom upwards. The spikes are short and the leaves are narrow. It is locally known as chukku-naripullu, (grass smelling like Zinziber officinale). In Travancore I do not know of many places where this grass is taken up for cultivation. Grass is collected from the jungle by women getting between 4 and 5 chuckrums (2-3 annas) a day and by men getting 7 chuckrums (4 annas) a day. A monster vessel of copper is installed as a 'primitive' vat. In one day, one and a half bottles of oil could be distilled. The prices vary from Rs. three to Rs. six for a bottle of 24 ounces. One Mr. A. F. Sanderson, the then Deputy Conservator of Forests, and Mr. Miller, a manager of the Vellanad plumbago mines, made an attempt to open an estate of oil grass. They went on for some time unmindful of outside talk, and collected a fair quantity of oil, but the business was dropped because it was taken up